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Notes on a Collection of Birds made by Mr. John Xantus, at Cape St. Lucas, lower California, by Spencer F. Baird.

Mineralogical Notes, No. II., by William Johnson Taylor.

Description of new species of the Coleopterous family Hesteridæ, by John Le Conte; and were referred to Committees.

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*Nov. 15th.*

Mr. LEA, President, in the Chair.

Twenty-seven members present.

A paper entitled Contributions to American Lepidopterology, No. II., by Brackenridge Clemens, M. D., was presented for publication in the Proceedings, and was referred to a Committee.

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*Nov. 22d.*

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Thirty-two members present.

A letter was read from Mr. Eugene Borda, dated Woodside, Schuylkill Co., Penn'a., Nov. 21st, giving information regarding two specimens of *Lepidodendron* presented this evening.

"One of the impressions is marked on both sides and is evidently the plant; the other fits exactly on one of the sides of the other. I have seen many *Lepidodendrons*, but never any such specimen; it is also the opinion of all those who have seen them, and I hope they will be a valuable addition to the collection of the Academy.

The locality is top slate of Back Vein on the south side of Mine Hill, at our Black Heath Colliery, the outlet of which is a tunnel at Wolf Creek, near Minersville. The Back vein is under the Black Heath Vein, some 20 yards west of the Mine Hill Gap. It keeps all the time distant from the Black Heath Vein, but east of the Gap; the two veins form but one, called the Mammoth Vein, and extensively worked at Clair."

A letter was read from George Davidson, Esq., dated San Francisco, Cal., Oct. 15th, giving information concerning a valuable and extensive series of specimens from the Geysers of the Pluton Cañon, presented this evening.

By Express this steamer I shall try to send to the Academy two boxes containing specimens of waters and products of the "Geysers," about 72 miles N. N. W. of this city. I made a visit there for two or three days, and went hurriedly over the whole ground, yet noting but a tithe of the wonders. The collection may enable some of you to judge of this great natural curiosity. By the same express I shall have forwarded a barrel containing the head, skin, and back bone of a very large bass (?) caught in the bay a couple of days ago, and which I obtained, supposing that, if nothing new, it would at least make up in size for the want of novelty. Notes of his size, appearance, contents of stomach, &c., were made by Dr. Ayres, but I have not yet obtained them. However, the following newspaper item will give you an idea of the specimen. When weighed his tail and head were just touching the ground, yet the scale in-1859.]

licated 360 lbs. "Dimensions: His weight was 360 pounds; length from tip of nose to end of tail seven feet and one inch; breadth round the shoulders, thickest part, five feet two inches; length from tip of nose to end of jaw, covering the gills, two feet four inches; circumference of mouth, when braced open, three feet two inches; spread of tail from tip to tip, two feet three inches."

Dr. R. E. Rogers remarked upon the great interest excited by these specimens, and on motion a Committee was appointed to investigate their nature, and to procure from Mr. Davidson further information regarding their occurrence.

The thanks of the Academy were then ordered to be tendered to Mr. Davidson for his valuable donation received this evening.

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Nov. 29th.

Mr. LEA, President, in the Chair.

Thirty-eight members present.

The Proceedings of the Biological Department for the present month were read.

The following papers, on report of the respective Committees, were ordered to be printed in the Proceedings.

#### Notes and Descriptions of Foreign Reptiles.

BY E. D. COPE.

##### TESTUDINATA.

The following species of Tortoises were brought by Mr. P. B. Duhaillu from equatorial West Africa, the present Autumn.

*Kinixys erosa* Gray. This curious species appears to be abundant throughout Gaboon, and the country of the Camma and Ogobai. Its range northward extends as far as the Gambia.

*Sternotherus Derbianus* Gray. Length, including head and neck, 14 in. 8 lin.; length of plastron, 6 in. 6 lin.; greatest breadth of do., 5 in.; breadth of head just before the tympani, 2 in. 5 lin.

Inhabits swamps in the Camma country.

This is probably the above named species, but judging from figures and descriptions, it approaches closely the *S. sinuatus* Smith, of South Africa, differing mainly in the form of the upper mandible, which is obtusely hooked in the former, bidentate in the latter. The habits of the two appear to differ; the S. African species inhabiting deep rivers, and remaining long at a time beneath the surface. It is considered by Dr. Gray (Catalogue Brit. Mus.) as identical with the *S. castaneus* Bell, but there is a manifest discrepancy between Smith's description, and the brief one of *castaneus* in the "Catalogue,"—principally with regard to the form of the vertebral scuta. The resemblance to the *S. Derbianus* is much closer, but judging as before, it is our impression that it is distinct from both.

##### HEPTATHYRA nob.

Cartilaginous border obsolete at the sides of the disc, and destitute of ossicles posteriorly. Sternum with two cartilaginous flaps, which cover the posterior extremities when retracted. Sternal callosities seven; one on each side corresponding to the closely connected hyo- and hyposternals, one to each of the

[Nov.